

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-33 and 35-42 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 21, 26, 31-33, and 39 are the independent claims.

Claims 34 and 43 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 7, 12, 13, 18- 21, 26, 31-33, 35, 39, and 42 have been amended. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Initially, Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claims 1-32 are allowed and the indication that claims 34, 35, 37, and 43 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. By the present Amendment, only various one of claims 1-32 has been amended to address formal objections to the same and objections to the Specification, as explained below. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-32 should remain allowed. By the present Amendment, Applicant has cancelled claims 34 and 43 and amended claims 33 and 39 to respectively recite the features of cancelled claims 34 and 43. Claims 35-38 and 40-42 depend variously from claims 33 and 39. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 33 and 35-42 are now in condition for allowance.

The Office Action objected to the Specification. Specifically, it was alleged that there was insufficient antecedent basis the recitation "the lth nozzle" in claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18-21, 26, 31, and 32. In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 21, 26, 31, and 32 changing "the lth nozzle" to --an lth nozzle--. Claims 6, 12, 18, and 20 are dependent claims. Further, attention is respectfully directed to, for example, at least paragraphs [0016], [0019], and [0020] where this feature is discussed. It was also alleged that there was insufficient antecedent basis for the recitation "the mth nozzle" in claims 12, 18, and 20. In response, Applicant has amended claims 12, 18, and 20 to change "the mth nozzle" to --an mth nozzle--. Further, attention is respectfully directed to, for example, at least paragraphs [0031] and [0032] where this feature is discussed. Lastly, Applicant has amended claim 42 to change the dependency of this claim from claim 39 to claim 41 to provide the necessary antecedent basis for the recitation "ninth signal."

Accordingly, favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objected to claims 1 and 12 on formal grounds. By the present Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 12 in view of the Examiner's comments.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 33 and 38-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,076,915 (Gast et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,390,698 (Yoshida et al.). Claim 36 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the combination of Gast et al. and Yoshida et al., in further view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0070998 (Bloomberg).

All rejections are respectfully traversed for the reasons set forth above.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the independent claims patentably define the present invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action. However, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to such matters.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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